Dienstältestes Schiff der US-Navy wird 50 Jahre alt.

Das Kommando-Schiff USS *Blue Ridge* beging das Jubiläum des 50. Dienstjahres am 14. November 2020. Damit ist die *Blue Ridge* das dienstälteste Schiff der US Navy. Fünfzig Dienstjahre sind für ein Schiff ungewöhnlich viel. Die steuerliche Nutzungsdauer eines Kauffahrteischiffes beträgt z.B. nur 12 Jahre. Nur das Museums-Schiff USS *Constitution*, gebaut 1797, ist noch länger „im Dienst“ der US Navy. Aber das ist ja ein Sonderfall.

Die USS *Blue Ridge* wurde 1970 in Dienst gestellt und ist seit 1979 in Yokosuka, Japan, stationiert. Sie beherbergt als Flaggschiff den Stab der 7.US-Flotte an Bord. Sie ist konstruiert worden, um die Aufgaben einer schwimmenden Kommandozentrale für Landungs-Operationen zu erfüllen. Solches tat sie z.B. im Vietnamkrieg und im ersten Golfkrieg. Die US Navy war mit den Leistungen des Schiffes immer sehr zufrieden.

In der jüngeren Vergangenheit wurde das Schiff aber leider berühmt als Ausgangspunkt des **größten Bestechungs-Skandals in der Geschichte der US-Navy**. Mehr als 40 Marine-Angehörige waren in den Skandal verwickelt, der unter der Bezeichnung „Fat Leonhard“ durch die Weltpresse ging. Fat Leonhard war der Spitzname des Firmenchefs der Glenn Defense Marine Asia Inc., der mit großen Geldsummen und Sachleistungen Marine-Angehörige von 1997 bis 2013 bestochen hatte, um lukrative Aufträge der US-Navy zu bekommen, die er dann zu überhöhten Preisen abrechnete. Die straffällig gewordenen Marine-Angehörigen hatten Dienst-

grade vom Unteroffizier bis zum Admiral. Etliche von Ihnen waren an Bord der USS *Blue Ridge* tätig. Der Schaden für die US-Navy betrug viele Mio Dollar.

Eine Chronik der Ereignisse findet man hier.

The New York Times

US Admiral in 'Fat Leonard' Navy Scandal Sentenced to 18 Months.

Leonard Glenn Francis, a ship supplier from Malaysia known as ‚Fat Leonard', has tried to bribe US Navy officers. Ten officers have pleaded guilty, mostly for accepting Leonard's bribes of trips and prostitutes in return for routing ships to ports where he could ring up millions of dollars in fraudulent charges.

Rear Adm. Robert Gilbeau

Fat Leonard is now a disabled cancer patient

September 17, 2018

The Malaysian businessman who spent a decade bribing U.S. Navy personnel with booze and prostitutes is too sick to be in a federal lockup and now has even trouble walking.…

Leonard Glenn Francis, alias ‚Fat Leonard'
Firmenchef der Glenn Defense Marine Asia

Fat Leonard 'ghostwriter' pleads guilty

November 14, 2018

A retired U.S. Navy captain who secretly edited documents and wrote emails for a defense contractor who was defrauding the Navy pleaded guilty to one count of conflict of interest.…

Former Navy commander jailed in Fat Leonard bribes-for-secrets case

October 22, 2018

A former U.S. Navy commander was sentenced to 30 months in prison Friday for taking bribes from a Singapore-based defense contractor in exchange for sensitive information about ship movements and port calls.…

Three new indictments in Fat Leonard scandal

August 20, 2018

A retired U.S. Navy captain and two senior enlisted men who were charged with taking bribes from a Singapore-based defense contractor now face up to 20 years in prison if convicted.…

Navy officer to Fat Leonard: 'I'm a small dog just trying to get a bone'

February 5, 2018

A former U.S. Navy Commander pleaded guilty to conspiracy in the bribes-for-secrets scandal that has decimated the Navy's Pacific command.

Navy commander guilty of obstructing Fat Leonard investigation

August 16, 2017

An active-duty U.S. Navy commander pleaded guilty for helping a Singapore-based defense contractor cheat the Navy and obstructing a federal criminal investigation into the overbilling fraud.

U.S. jails two Singaporeans for Fat Leonard fraud

August 14, 2017

Two former executives of a Singapore-based defense contractor were sentenced to prison Friday for helping their employer in a $35 million fraud against the U.S. Navy.

Former fighter pilot faces military charges for Fat Leonard bribes

June 29, 2017

In the first prosecution by the military related to the massive Glenn Defense Marine Asia scandal, a former F/A-18 Hornet pilot faced a preliminary hearing Monday

Former U.S. Naval Attaché jailed for taking Fat Leonard bribes

June 19, 2017

A retired Navy Captain who served as the U.S. Naval Attaché to the Philippines was sentenced Friday to 41 months in prison for helping a foreign defense contractor avoid vessel and cargo inspections by using diplomatic cover.…

(Update 12. Sept. 2022)

Malaysian businessman escapes house arrest: What we know so far about the 'Fat Leonard' scandal

Leonard Glenn Francis, who ran a military contracting company out of Singapore, pleaded guilty in 2015 to offering about US$500,000 in bribes to US Navy officers.

United States law enforcement agencies are on the lookout for Malaysian businessman Leonard Glenn Francis, who is reportedly on the run after he escaped house arrest in San Diego, California Sunday Sep 4. Francis, who is widely known as "Fat Leonard", was due to be sentenced in three weeks, after he pleaded guilty in a corruption case involving the US Navy. He was found missing from his San Diego residence when police were sent to check on him after discovering that there was a problem with his electronic ankle bracelet.

WHAT THE CORRUPTION SCANDAL WAS ABOUT

The Malaysian national ran a military contracting company out of Singapore. He was accused of giving bribes to Navy officers to influence them to steer official work toward his shipyards, which American prosecutors said had been overcharging the Navy. US media reported that Francis was arrested in 2013 following a federal sting operation in a San Diego hotel, after he was suspected of running a vast corruption scheme which involved some naval officers treated to food, drink and paid sex. He was said to have used his influence with senior commanders to secure lucrative military contracts often involving the Indo-Pacific based 7th Fleet - the largest of the Navy's forward deployed fleets. He pleaded guilty in 2015 to offering about US$500,000 in bribes to Navy officers. In return, the officers made sure that US naval vessels, including aircraft carriers, were diverted towards Francis' Singapore-based company, Glenn Defense Marine Asia, for servicing.

In the process, the Navy was overcharged by an estimated US$35 million. This was later dubbed the "Fat Leonard" scandal by the US media. According to The Washington Post, the scandal was perhaps the worst national-security breach of its kind to hit the US Navy since the end of the Cold War.

WHO HAVE BEEN FOUND GUILTY SO FAR ?

According to US media reports, at least four Navy officers have been found guilty so far. Another 29 people, including naval officials, contractors and Francis himself, have pleaded guilty and are awaiting their sentencing, American media reported. Additionally, a former lead contract specialist with the US Navy based in Singapore was also involved. Gursharan Kaur Sharon Rachael had received more than $130,000 in bribes from Francis in exchange for sensitive US Navy information. Before she resigned in 2015, she had been an employee of the US government for more than 25 years. In July 2018, Gursharan was sentenced by a district court in Singapore to two years and nine months in jail. Francis, who was reported to be suffering from numerous health problems, including kidney cancer, was allowed to be released to house arrest in 2018, while waiting for his sentence. The house arrest arrangement, said to be highly unusual, was to enable him to undergo cancer treatment while he was acting as a witness for the federal prosecutors.

He was due to be sentenced on Sep 22 and faces a maximum custodial term of 25 years.

WHAT ARE THE CIRCUMSTANCES AROUND HIS ESCAPE?

The federal agency responsible for Francis' arrest, the US Marshals Services said on Monday that the businessman might have planned for his escape. "He was planning this out, that's for sure," Supervisory Deputy US Marshal Omar Castillo said in a statement. Mr Castillo said that when police went to Francis' San Diego home on Sunday, they found that no one was around. They then notified the US Marshals who went to the house and verified that he was no longer there. The San Diego Union-Tribune reported that a GPS bracelet which has been cut off was found in the house, while neighbours said they had seen moving trucks coming and going at the property in the days leading up to his escape. According to the US Marshals, they are now investigating multiple leads on the whereabouts of Francis, though they did not discount the possibility that he might have crossed into Mexico. US media reported that the manner of Francis' escape had led to some questions over the US Marshals' competence in handling the case, especially given that Francis is a central figure in **the biggest scandal in US naval history**.

Source : CAN

Reward Offered for Help Finding Fugitive “Fat Leonard”

US Marshall are offering a reward for information on Leonard Francis and his whereabouts

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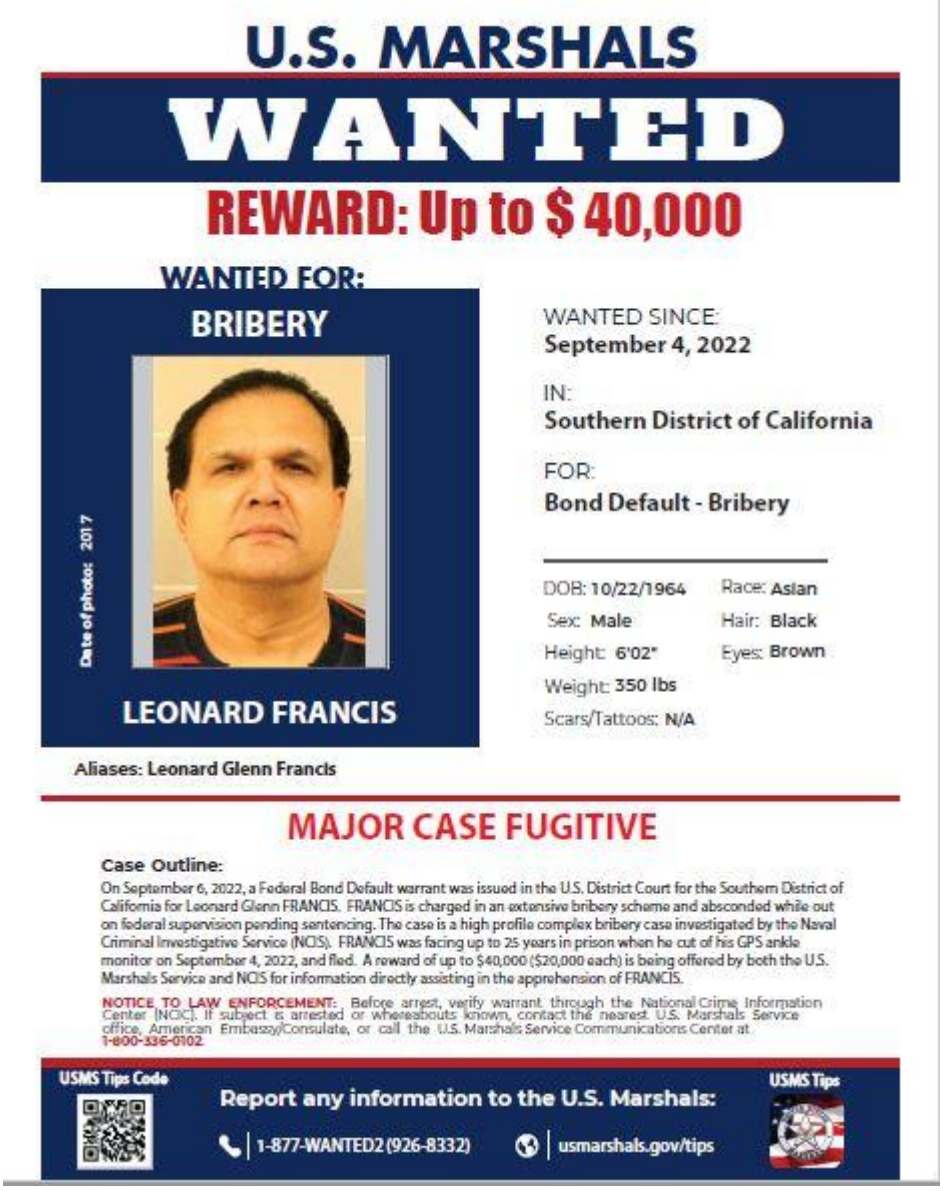

A week after admitting that Leonard Francis, aka “Fat Leonard,” the Malaysian businessman at the center of the now infamous U.S. Navy bribery scandal had gone missing from home detainment, the U.S. Marshals and Naval Criminal Investigative Service is offering a reward for any information leading to his arrest. According to the “wanted poster,” they are offering up $40,000 for information that helps capture the fugitive.

The poster simply describes Francis as standing 6 feet 2 inches in height. His last weight is recorded at approximately 350 lbs, down from the 400 lbs that earned him the nickname “Fat Leonard” among his co-conspirators that included high-ranking officers in the U.S. Navy’s 7th fleet. The poster also provides a timeline for the discovery that Francis had skipped town leaving home confinement in the San Diego area.

In the highly-publicized case, Francis had pleaded guilty to providing at least $500,000 in bribes to individuals in the U.S. Navy for information and helping to direct business to his company. He was arrested in 2013 and pleaded guilty two years later. Francis, who had been cooperating with prosecutors was living in a home while undergoing

medical treatment and awaiting sentencing, which after several postponements, was set for September 22.

Francis is officially wanted for bond default in a bribery case. The charge is a fugitive in a major case. Saying that “his current whereabouts are unknown,” the U.S. Marshall Service reports that no less than 10 agencies are now involved in the search. The U.S. has also issued an international bulletin for Francis. The hope is that international authorities would detain and extradite Francis with one focus being on Singapore where he worked or Malaysia where he is originally from. Both countries have extradition agreements with the U.S.

Before leaving confinement, Francis was wearing a tracking device commonly known as an “ankle bracelet.” The authorities received a signal around 7:30 a.m. on September 4 showing that the device had been tampered with but failed to immediately proceed to the house. They attempted to contact Francis and spoke with his defense attorney. The San Diego Police Department made a welfare check at the house around 2:40 p.m. reporting that it appeared that no one was home. It was not until 4:00 p.m. that the San Diego Fugitive Task Force entered the residence. They found the monitoring device had been cut off and the home was empty. Subsequent interviews with neighbors revealed that rental trucks had been seen at the home in the days leading up to the disappearance.